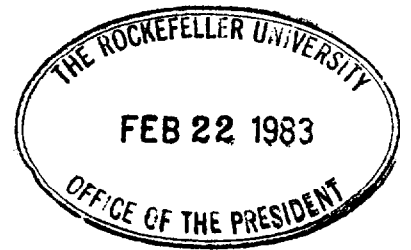


The Twentieth Century Fund

41 East 70th Street
New York, N.Y. 10021

(212) 535-4441

M.J. Rossant, *Director*



February 18, 1983

Mr. Joshua Lederburg
President
Rockefeller University
1231 York Avenue
New York, New York 10021

Dear Mr. Lederburg:

On behalf of the Trustees and staff of the Twentieth Century Fund, I am writing to invite you to participate on an independent Fund Task Force on Communicating Scientific and Technological Risk to the Public.

The Task Force's assignment will be to examine how pertinent and timely information on critical events involving complex technologies can be effectively conveyed to the public. This is an increasingly controversial subject as disputes over the Three Mile Island accident, Love Canal, and the Med-Fly attest. Because the Fund has long experience in studying problems involving the press and the public, we think that we have a major advantage in dealing with this critical problem. I am sure that you will agree that an independent Task Force established by the Fund can make a significant contribution, and I would be even more confident of its significance if you agree to take an active part.

We have asked Dorothy Nelkin, professor of sociology at Cornell University's Program on Science, Technology and Society, to prepare a factual background paper on the problems for resolving them. She has completed a first draft, which I am enclosing. Ms. Nelkin, as well as I, would welcome your comments on it before she undertakes her revisions.

Our plan is to bring together a small group of no more than fifteen, all distinguished Americans, to serve on the Task Force. Ms. Nelkin will be rapporteur for the Task Force,

Mr. Joshua Lederburg
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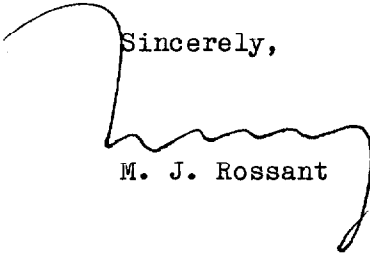
preparing a draft of its report, which the Fund will edit and publish together with her background paper. (Under separate cover I am sending you an earlier Fund Task Force report. In addition, members of the Fund staff will be attached to the Task Force to take care of administrative details and to provide added research help.

It is my expectation that the Task Force will hold four to five day-long meetings over the next six months with the objective of issuing a report containing its policy recommendations. At the first meeting, the members of the Task Force will set its agenda and future schedule. The Task Force can, for instance, decide to hold two-day meetings, and it may want to invite either government officials or private experts as guest witnesses. As we believe the problem to be an urgent one, we hope to schedule our first meeting either March 4 or March 11.

The Fund will pay travel and accommodation costs for members of the Task Force, and will provide modest honorarium for each meeting attended. We also will arrange for the publication of the Task Force report and seek its distribution to a broad audience following its initial release at a press conference, which members of the Task Force are expected to attend.

I hope that you will join the Task Force. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



M. J. Rossant

MJR:rdb
Encl.